

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

No. 157.—VOL. IV.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1884.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way. By "M.A. (Oxon.)".....	1	CORRESPONDENCE:—	
"Who are Our Spiritual Enemies?"		Christmas Thoughts.....	7
By A. J. Penny.....	2	Miss Corner's Christmas Tree ..	8
Experiences in Spiritualism.....	3	Testimonial to Mr. H. Burton	8
Notice to Subscribers.....	3	Phases of Materialisation.....	9
Psychology and Biography.....	4	Testimonial to Psychical Phenomena.....	11
To Our Readers.....	5	Advice to Inquirers.....	11
1884.—A Prospect. By "M.A. (Oxon.)".....	6	The Conduct of Public Physical Séances.....	12

[The Editor of "LIGHT" desires it to be distinctly understood that he can accept no responsibility as to the opinions expressed by Contributors and Correspondents. Free and courteous discussion is invited, but writers are alone responsible for the articles to which their names are attached.]

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

During the year now past, or within short reach of its limits, many representative Spiritualists have been called from their labours. Epes Sargent, first and foremost of American Spiritualists, whose labours for the cause he loved were unwearied, as they were absolutely unpaid, save by the affectionate regard of all who knew him. In Germany, Zöllner, whose bold and outspoken defence of the faith that had sprung from a knowledge founded on experimental investigation, so irritated the German scientists that they took opportunity of his death to impugn his sanity. Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., in England, an early and always consistent Spiritualist, most of whose experience was gained in that best of schools, the home circle. J. R. Newton, the great healer of disease, whose long labours in the cause of suffering humanity had entitled him to enter into his rest. William Denton, cut off in the prime of his earthly life, while he seemed to have abundant energy and unknown potencies for good within him. S. B. Brittain, who occupied a prominent place in one department of American Spiritualism as "Editor at large." Mrs. Crowell, the devoted wife and true helpmeet of one of our prominent American Spiritualists. John Beattie, shrewd, hard-headed investigator, and firm believer in what he had proved for himself to be true. Colonel Brayn, known to many as the "Jersey Christian Spiritualist." These, and others too, have been summoned from their labours here to a wider sphere of usefulness. Of the early pioneers of what now has become a great power for good or for evil, more are on the other side than remain with us. But the heirs of their faith—of their knowledge rather—are numbered by no method of progression known to our arithmetic. They are scattered over the face of the earth, and their influence is strongest where it is apparently most countervailed by bigotry and prejudice.

Among the many stories now appearing in the monthly magazines that are founded on Spiritualism, one of the best is "The Clerk's Tale," by M. O. Vachell, in the current number of *Longman*. I put aside the average ghost story which is usually too evident fiction, crude, conventional, and quite unattractive. Of late, however, since Spiritualism has become widely known, we have a class of story which is realistic, *vraisemblable*, and which evidently implies on the part of the writer more knowledge than it is safe to

shew. Such stories are welcome when serious argument or narrative would find prompt exclusion. It is so easy to put off inconvenient questions. "Not a bad story; true? Oh! I have no idea. Of course not, but it reads well." So the editor is uncompromised, and the *Saturday Review* is not exercised in leaded type as it is over Mr. Gurney and Psychical Research. I believe these stories are founded on fact, if they be not narratives of actual occurrence, and I know that those who write them must have had what Spiritualists call "personal experience" in some way or other. Of this class an excellent specimen is the short story I have referred to. It is a story of "The Double." A Foreign Office clerk walking under Hyde Park railings, oppressed by unaccountable presentiment, is passed by his own double, to his vast horror. He follows the apparition of himself, in his habit as he lived, down to the very ring he wore, and sees it disappear through the door of his house. Overcome with horror he paces the streets till daylight, and returns to find that a large bust had fallen from a bracket over his bed, and had broken into huge pieces on the iron rail just over his pillow. The *doppel-ganger* had saved him from death. How many cases of such veritable occurrences are on record, students of the Occult know. I collected some, years ago, in my "Transcorporeal Action of Spirit," if I remember rightly.

What are the sensations at the time of death? When the decease is natural and timely we know that it is usually accompanied by a deadening of the outer senses, a gradual withdrawal of interest in the external, and a receding of the spirit until the act of dissolution is complete. It is a process as natural as is birth. But what if the death is violent and untimely? Even then it seems that the nerves of sensation are rapidly paralysed, and that death is not accompanied by the terrors that are imaginatively assigned to the grim King. Some curious Researchers have lately been telling us that hanging, when it involves suffocation only, is perfectly painless. It is the process of resuscitation that is so agonising. If this be so, and we have the evidence of some consentient witnesses who have gone through the process—then our criminals die easy, unless the dislocation of the vertebræ by the long drop is a different matter. For obvious reasons we have no personal evidence on this head. Those who have been recovered after going through all the stages of death by drowning, up to complete paralysis of all consciousness and of all sensations, tell the same story. There is no wrench, no active pain, but only a dreamy floating away into oblivion amid a rapidly passing panorama of acts, the most momentous and the least impressive apparently alike, of their ebbing life. And just now a grim story is published, which, if it be true, goes to shew that being made the prey of a shark has no terror except in anticipation. Two divers were occupied about a sunken vessel, when one urgently signalled to be drawn up. He gained the boat, and at once related that his comrade had been carried off by a shark. He had scarcely finished when the man in question, "rose about fifty yards from the boat, and was picked up insensible, with several holes punched in the metallic part of his diving-suit."

In due time he recovered, and told his story. He had been by the side of the sunken vessel, about to signal to be

drawn up, when he was aware of a shadowy body moving towards him, of a sudden stillness, and of the disappearance of every fish. "Suddenly a feeling of terror seized me. I felt imperilled to flee from something, I knew not what; a vague horror seemed grasping after me such as a child fancies when leaving a darkened room." After that there was no fear or horror. The brute seized him, but fortunately its teeth met upon the thick copper breast-plate where the protection was strongest. It tore with him through the water, and his sensations are thus described:—

"I was perfectly conscious, but somehow I felt no terror at all. There was only a feeling of numbness. I wondered how long it would be before those teeth would crunch through, and whether they would strike first into my back or my breast. Then I thought of Maggie and the baby, and wondered who would take care of them, and if she would ever know what had become of me. All these thoughts passed through my brain in an instant, but in that time the connecting air tube had been snapped, and my head seemed ready to burst with pressure while the monster's teeth kept crunching and grinding away upon my harness. Then I felt the cold water begin to pour in, and heard the bubble, bubble, bubble, as the air escaped into the creature's mouth. I began to hear great guns, and to see fireworks, and rainbows, and sunshine, and all kinds of pretty things; then I thought I was floating away on a rosy summer cloud, dreaming to the sound of sweet music. Then all became blank. The shark might have eaten me then at his leisure, and I never would have been the wiser."

Whether or not the story, sensational as it is, be or be not coloured, it bears on it, psychologically, marks of truth. The same, I believe, has been said of those who have been fascinated by a snake or seized by a beast of prey. The anticipatory horror embraces all. The actual death, terrible as it seems, is probably quite painless. Nor, if we may judge by some cases, does a violent death seem to act on the spirit as we should anticipate. Doubtless, to be rudely severed from the body is to be plucked as untimely fruit. The wrench is hard, and the bough is lacerated. But I have recorded in my last volume at least one case in which a death of terrible violence—a man crushed by a steam roller—did not produce unconsciousness in the spirit or prevent it from communicating.

"M. A. (Oxon.)"

"WHO ARE OUR SPIRITUAL ENEMIES?"

A PATCHWORK FROM BÖHME.

By A. J. PENNY.

VIII.

In all Böhme's writings he explains with most varied iteration that *creaturely* life begins in the sinking down of fire, calling it ("Election," chap. 3, par. 10) "a birth of death, where yet not death, but the beginning of the life of nature exists." The beginning of life everlasting, of the creature that is *new* in the old Adamic nature, takes its rise in precisely the same process; a death to the *kindled* fire of our evil passions, produces the light, and that ultimates its meek glory in the heavenly *substance* which is formed by the water of eternal life. The analogy is complete and exact. "In the outward world, in all creatures, every life, viz., the essential fire life, draweth substance to it, and that is its food to eat. And the fire of its life consumeth the substance, and giveth forth the spirit of the power out of that which is consumed, and that is the life of the *creature*. And you see, doubtless very rightly, how the life ariseth out of the *death*; it becometh no *life* unless it break that out of which the life should go forth. ("Incarnation," part 2, chap. 5, pars. 46, 47, 48.) Now, "the centre out of which evil and good floweth is *in thee*; that which thou awakest in thee, be it fire or light, that will be taken in again by its *like*, either by God's *anger* fire, or by God's *light* fire; each of them electeth or chooseth to itself that which is like its property." (Apology 1, part 1, par. 99.) "The wicked should not dare to say God makes me evil;

but the *God in him*, in Whose ground he stands, makes him what he can serve to be according to the utmost possibility." ("Election," chap. 9, par. 26.) "Power in the light is God's love-fire; and the power in the darkness is the fire of God's anger; and yet it is but *one* only fire; but divided into two principles; that the one might be manifest in the other, for the *flame* of anger is the manifestation of the great Love, and in the darkness the light is made known, else it were not manifest to itself." ("Mysterium Magnum," chap. 8, par. 27.) I pray seekers for the *cause* of permitted evil to pause a little on that last sentence. In the "Third Theosophic Question," from pars. 26 to 45, this subject of the *fire of God* is made clearer, to my thinking, than in any other of Böhme's works.

That the common notion of hell-fire as a punishment inflicted on evil souls *ab extra* was allowed by the permissive providence of God, and for so many centuries, is a marvel, and must be a snare to those who receive the words of Scripture literally according to their surface meanings; but it does not stand alone among the misunderstandings by which Divine revelation has been obscured. And considering that no truth for which the human mind at its *present* stage of growth is prepared, can be the *whole* truth, on any given point of spiritual wisdom, nor *absolute* truth free from the modifications a finite recipient unavoidably gives to it, we should probably be wiser if we expected, as the Swedenborgians do, a continual opening of quite new meanings of Scripture, as the mind of the race opens more and more to heavenly influx.

But still, being ready to accept new meanings, and dismissing old interpretations, are very different postures of mind, and one does wonder at Divine love conniving, so to speak, at human error, by permitting the messengers of its Gospel to use language that could not but justify the horrible creed of Calvin; for example, St. Paul's sayings in Rom. ix., which have notoriously led hundreds of men and women to causeless despair, or to confidence almost as unwarrantable. From the 15th to the 24th verse of this chapter, every sentence seems calculated to confirm the terrible doctrine of irresistible predestination. Words could not, one would think, more distinctly imply an arbitrary will in the Most High God to *cause* some men to be vessels of wrath filled to destruction, in order "to make His power to be known." Yet, as this contradicts the whole tenor of the New Testament, we know it cannot be a true interpretation; nor can all the ingenuity of theologians, by any strain of argument, reconcile this chapter with the recorded teaching of Jesus Christ. It would be possible so to underlie these words of St. Paul's with Böhme's elucidation as to bring them into a sort of harmony with his oft-repeated phrase about God's desire to manifest all the wonders of Eternal Nature. "The Word hath created a will in the darkness to manifest the darkness with all its forms of the wonders of God the Father." ("Threefold Life," chap. 4, par. 21.) But this sort of process would not seem honest to me, since I think it quite clear that Paul himself as little understood the real meaning of the expression he refers to, "God hardened the heart of Pharaoh," as he understood the period indicated by Christ Jesus for his future visible return; and I, not believing that the Holy Spirit ceased to reveal truth after the time of the Apostles, accept Böhme's account of those words as revelation, and am thankful thus, and only thus, to understand "*whom He will He hardeneth*."

Duly to appreciate the following passage, his whole treatise "On the Election of Grace" should be studied; it is, as a whole, quite irresistibly convincing. Commenting on it in Rom. ix. v. 21, he says:—"The false, or wicked and evil soul and the holy soul come both out of Adam's soul, as out of one lump or clod of ground; which a man must understand to be spirit, or spiritually in the great mystery; but the one separates or distinguishes itself into light, and the other into darkness. This potter makes out of every separation or distinction a vessel, such as to which the separated or distinguished matter is useful and fit." . . . "As the Ens of the soul is, such also is the will of or to the making. God sits *not* over the will and makes it as a potter does his pot, but he generates it out of his own properties." . . . "God works to the producing life out of everything; out of the evil Ens an evil life, out of the good Ens a good life." (Chap. 9, pars. 4 to 11.)

EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM.

No. III.

By H. T. HUMPHREYS.

(Continued from page 566.)

In the year 1868 Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall removed to a house in Ashley-place, Victoria-street, and there one evening I formed one of a party of nine or ten, to meet Mr. D. D. Home. We sat in a room well lighted with gas, and communicating with the adjoining room, the folding doors between the two being thrown open and both rooms well lighted. A large fire was burning in the grate farthest from where we sat. Mr. Home rose and walked to the fireplace, turned round on the hearth-rug, took from the mantel-shelf a lustre in which a wax-light was burning; this he placed on his head and standing upright in front of the chimney glass, was seen by all of us to increase in height to the extent of some eight or ten inches. He then sank to some six or eight inches below his normal stature, and having returned to his usual height replaced the lustre. Coming forward to us he took Lord Adare (now the Earl of Dunraven) and the Master of Lindsay (now the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres), and placing one beside each post of the folding doors, lay down on the floor, touching the feet of one with his head, and the feet of the other with his feet. He was then again elongated and pushed both Lord Adare and the Master of Lindsay backward along the floor with his head and feet as he was stretched out, his arms and hands remaining motionless by his side.

This was plainly seen by us all. I can only, however, give the names already mentioned and that of Lady Dunsany besides those of Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall and myself.

It was in the year 1868 that I undertook to assist Mr. Home in preparing the second series of "Incidents in My Life." He was at my chambers one day, and taking up a slip of paper commenced writing as follows:—"The autumn of 1863, while I was at Dieppe." Just as he had written this, he recollected an appointment which he was obliged to keep, and he left the chambers. I took the slip of paper and placed it, with others, between the leaves of a book which I had arranged as the receptacle for the materials to be used in the work we were preparing. This book was placed in a drawer in my study table, which I had cleared out for the purpose of holding the materials for the work. Owing to circumstances Mr. Home did not resume the work, and though before leaving London he called at my chambers to get from me a small memorandum book which was in the drawer, he never came within seven or eight feet of the drawer, and then only on the opposite side of the table. The book remained unopened in the drawer, which was kept locked, for about three years, and I only opened the drawer during that period for the purpose of throwing into it some cutting from a newspaper or other scrap which I thought might be found useful.

In August, 1871, Mr. Home returned to London, when he took rooms in Norfolk-street, Strand. I then opened the drawer, took out the book and all other papers and documents, and carried them down to the rooms, where I proceeded to arrange them. On taking this slip from the book I discovered written just beneath Mr. Home's writing, the single word, "Elliotson." I shewed this slip on the same day to an acquaintance, now deceased, who at once said "That's Dr. Elliotson's writing. I have had many letters from him. I know it well." It was on the next day, the 29th August, 1871, that I shewed it to Mr. Home, who at once said, "That is very delightful." I said, "Dr. Elliotson must have written it himself while the paper was shut up in my drawer." Three raps sounded from the floor. I said, "Is that Dr. Elliotson?" Three raps were again heard. I said, "I know why he wrote his name. It was to remind us to tell the history of his conversion to Spiritualism,

which took place at Dieppe in the autumn of 1863." Again came three raps, and we had some further replies afterwards to questions.

I have now but to mention one other matter in connection with the subject, and thus I come at once to the present time, for it is not many months since a very dear friend of mine passed into the spirit-land. He was a worthy, kind-hearted gentleman, and his passage from earth had not been expected to take place by any means so soon as was the case, so that to a certain extent the termination of his earth-life might be said to have been somewhat sudden. He had often laughed at me for my Spiritualism. On the night of his decease he was seen in my house before anyone there had any idea of his leaving earth. He subsequently came to my wife and wrote, not very readily, but still intelligibly, to a great extent, and she and I have had many messages from him. In one of his earliest messages, he said, "I did not believe in Spiritualism, but I do now." He said that as none of his family believed in Spiritualism, he could not go to them, but at first he told us that he was in a very lonely condition. He liked to come, he said, to my house, and to be with me when I was reading and explaining the Bible to my children. It was not for some months that he said he was advancing, and then he told us that he had a house opposite to "a tree of life, which bears fruit for the healing of the nations." He said he had "a house with a silver wall and a golden roof," under which he sat and waited for the Spirit of God, which, he said, "sometimes comes to instruct me, and to shew the way I should progress." He added, "Light came to me through your teaching the children here, and I was taught to look to the Spirit of God, which came to instruct me." He has since told me that he has progressed further.

I may add that on more than one occasion while sitting at Mr. S. C. Hall's, with Mr. Home, we have felt the whole room shaking under us and our chairs have been shaken. On one occasion also I was sitting close to Mrs. Jencken and her two boys and Mrs. Kane, on the platform at a meeting convened by Mr. J. Enmore Jones, when the platform under us vibrated and several pots of plants placed in front were tilted in the sight of all present.

Some of the preceding accounts would be of no value whatever as evidences, as they only appeal to those already acquainted with Spiritualism. With regard to them all, however, I have written only about what I *know* could have come from none of those in bodily presence at the séances, and I am ready to testify fully to all that I have written.

Kennington,

December 15th, 1883.

BACK NUMBERS OF "LIGHT."

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be obliged if any subscriber, having copies of the following numbers of "LIGHT" to spare, will kindly forward them to the office. They are urgently required for sets. Full price will in each case be given for them.

No. 105 for January 6th, 1883.

,, 106 ,, ,, 13th, ,,

,, 128 ,, June 16th, ,,

,, 127 ,, August 18th, ,,

SPECIAL NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.—Subscriptions to "LIGHT" for 1884 are now due. We shall be obliged if subscribers will forward the amount, viz., 10s. 10d., for each copy, without further application, to "The Manager of 'LIGHT,'" 3, Great James-street, Bedford-row, London, W.C. P.O.O.'s may be made payable to Henry Barnes. While remitting for the copies supplied to them personally, our readers may, in view of the interesting series of papers by "M.A. (Oxon.)," to appear during the current year, feel inclined to order an extra copy to be sent to the address of some friend or acquaintance likely to be interested in this subject. Were this course adopted by each reader it would at once place "LIGHT" on a secure financial basis, and enable us to devote attention to the carrying out of various improvements which cannot even be considered until this position is secured.

PSYCHOLOGY AND BIOGRAPHY.

Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton.

To the readers of "Zanoni" and the "Strange Story" it will be no surprise to discover that in the early life of their author, his interests were drawn in the direction of the occult. The two volumes of the Life, Letters, and Remains of the distinguished novelist, now given to the public by his son, the Earl of Lytton,* comprise the history of his career to the age alone of twenty-eight.

The following are a few of the interesting references to things occult and psychological which may be found in the volumes.

The ancient mansion of Knebworth, in Hertfordshire, dating originally from the reign of Edward III., for many centuries the home of Bulwer's ancestry on the maternal side, the Lyttons, and whose name and estates he inherited, first awoke in early childhood the peculiar romantic bent of his genius and his tendency towards study of things occult. It is thus that Bulwer describes these early impressions, especially in connection with

The Haunted Rooms at Knebworth.

"I remember especially a long, narrow gallery, adjoining the great drawing-room (and hung with faded and dim portraits), which terminated in rooms that were called 'haunted.' They were of great antiquity, covered with gloomy tapestry, and containing huge high chimney-pieces, with rude reliefs set in oak frames, grotesquely carved. In another room adjoining these and belonging to one of the square towers of the gateway, was a curious trapdoor, that gave access to a chamber beneath it—if chamber it can be called, which had neither doors nor windows. . . . Sir William Lytton, . . . one of the commissioners sent to treat with King Charles, at Oxford, . . . had received the honour of being one of the Protector's prisoners, in Hell-hole. . . . He had christened this mysterious chamber by the same euphonious name. How could I help writing romances when I had walked trembling at my own footsteps through that long gallery, with its ghostly portraits, mused in those tapestry chambers, and peeped with bristling hair into the shadowy abysses of Hell-hole?"†

"The 'haunted rooms' mentioned in this letter," observes the present Lord Lytton, "were pulled down in 1812, but are still remembered with mingled awe and pride by a few aged inhabitants of Knebworth village."

In another place we meet with this beautiful reference to his love of things spiritual, and to his

Yearning after Knowledge of the True Nature of Man.

"To unravel nature, to analyse the passions and affections, searching out the hidden springs of human conduct, and the remote sources of human character; these have been the aims which, pursued it may be with success or effort not wholly vain, have at least rendered attractive to myself the paths of action as well as study, by connecting both study and action with an interest, a curiosity, an allurements reaching far beyond the scope of either. . . . And even in my wanderings from the plain *vestigia hominum* into by-paths lonely and obscure, still the knowledge I have sought has been directly related to the noblest thing I have known—the human Man with the eternal Soul. Fain would I trace his ascent in the scale of spirit, when he passes from my sight, but not from my search beyond the portals of the grave. Hour upon hour, day by day, do I sit alone amidst my thoughts, . . . absorbed in the desire to know. Still the question that perplexed the infant occupies the man; still, in that sense of identity which comprises the perception of all things living, and with which, were it perishable, all things would perish, I find the same mystery, and receive from it the same revelation."—Vol. I. p. 108.

The autobiographical portion of these volumes gives under the heading

Life with the Gipsies,

in the year 1824, when Edward Lytton Bulwer was one-and-twenty, a very romantic story, which bristles, so to

speak, with the weirdly romantic. A pretty gipsy girl meets him on a common at sunset, and says:—

"Shall I tell your fortune, my pretty young gentleman?"

"She looked me in the face," he continues, "quickly but searchingly, and then bent her dark eyes over my hand."

"Chut! chut!" she said, with a sound of sorrowful pity, 'but you have known sorrows already. You lost your father when you were very young. You have brothers, but no sister. Ah! you have had a sweetheart when you were a mere boy. You will never see her again, never. The line is clean broken off. It cut you to the heart. You nearly died of it.'"

"I snatched away my hand in amaze. 'You are indeed a witch!' said I, falteringly. 'Did I offend you? I'll not say any more of what has passed: let me look for your good luck in the time to come.' 'Do so, and say something pleasant. Conceal the bad fortune as much as you can.' I felt very credulous and superstitious. 'Chut! chut! But that new star thwarts you much!' 'What new star?' 'I don't know what they call it. But it makes men fond of strange studies, and brings about crosses and sorrow that you never think to have.* Still you are a prosperous gentleman: you will never come to want; you will be much before the world, raise your head high, but I fear you'll not have the honours you count on now. Chut! chut! pity! pity! You'll know scandal and slander; you'll be spoken ill of where you least deserve. That will vex you much, but you are proud and will not stoop to shew it. Your best friends and your worst enemies will be women. . . . Chut! chut! how often you will be your own enemy. But don't be down-hearted. There is plenty of good fortune and success in store for you—not like me. Look at my hand. See, here where the cross comes against the line of life.' 'Nay you don't believe for yourself all that you say to others. Our fortunes are not written in the palm of our hands!' 'For those who can read them yes,' said the gipsy, 'but very few have the gift. Some can read fortunes by fixing their eyes on anything—the gift comes to them.'"—Vol. I., pp. 315-316.

The careers thus foreseen were the careers that actually arrived—both for the young aristocratic gentleman and the poor gipsy girl—as the narrative goes on to shew.

The gipsy had referred to the death of Bulwer's early love, for the history of which guileless little romance read the volume. The remembrance of this sorrow in after years called forth the following true and graceful tribute of love.

In an early essay "On the Want of Sympathy," evidently referring to the death of his boyish "first-love," he thus writes of

Death as the Great Treasure-House of Love.

"My lost, my buried, my unforgotten! You whom I knew in the first fresh years of life—you who were snatched away from me before one leaf of the summer of youth and of love was withered. . . . Now that I know the eternal workings of the world, and the destiny of all human ties, I rejoice that you are no more. . . . On your image there rests not a shadow of a shade! In my hours of sickness, in the darkness of despondency—in the fever of petty cares, and all the terror of the future—you glide before me in your fresh youth, and with your tender smile. . . . Death is the great treasure-house of love. There lies buried the real wealth of passion, of youth; there, the heart, once so prodigal, now grown the miser, turns to contemplate the hoards it has hidden from the world."

Lord Lytton's Studies of the Occult. Character and career of Lord Beaconsfield as divined by him through Geomancy.

"His well-known interest in studies of an occult and mystical description, which will fill a chapter in the story of his later life," says his son, "led him for many years to find amusement in the process of divination called 'Geomancy.' And at Wildbad, in 1860, he cast and interpreted the subjoined Geomantic figure of the character and career of Benjamin Disraeli." (For the "Geomantic Figure" itself, the reader must consult p. 328 of Vol. II.; its explanation is subjoined.)

"INDEX."

(B. Disraeli, Wildbad: September 3, 1860.) "A singularly fortunate figure. A strongly marked influence towards the acquisition of coveted objects. He would

* The Life, Letters, and Literary Remains of Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton. By his Son. Vol. I. and II. London: Kegan Paul. Can be obtained of the Psychological Press Association.

† Vol. I., p. 30.

* "The astrologers attribute these effects to Herschel," observes Lord Lytton in a note, adding also at p. 317, in another note, that "he (Edward) was a student of astrology and chiromancy; and seriously."

gain largely by marriage in the pecuniary sense, which makes a crisis in his life. He would have a peaceful hearth, to his own taste, and leaving him free for ambitious objects. In honours, he has not only luck, but a felicity far beyond the most favourable prospects that could be reasonably anticipated from his past career, his present position, or his personal endowments.

"He will have a higher name than I should say his intellect quite warrants, or than would now be conjectured. He will certainly have very high honours. Whether official, or in rank, high as compared with his birth or actual achievements. He has a temperament that finds pleasure in what belongs to social life. He has not the reserve common to literary men. He has considerable veneration, and will keep well with the Church and State, not merely from policy, but from sentiment and instinct. His illnesses will be few and quick. But his last illness may be lingering. He is likely to live to old age—the close of his career much honoured. He will be to the last largely before the public. Much feared by his opponents, but greatly beloved, not alone by those immediately about him, but by large numbers of persons to whom he is personally unknown. He will die, in or out of office, in an exceptionally high position, greatly lamented, and surrounded to the end by all the magnificent planetary influences of a propitious Jupiter.

"No figure I have drawn more surprises me than this. It is so completely opposed to what I myself should have augured, not only from the rest of his career, but from my knowledge of the man. He will bequeath a repute out of all proportion to the opinion now entertained of his intellect, even by those who think most highly of it. Greater honours far than he has yet acquired are in store for him. His enemies, though active, are not persevering. His official friends, though not ardent, will yet minister to his success.—E. T. B."

We will conclude our extracts with some remarks of Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, on Dreams.

"I love to read of the matutinal habits of great men," he says, "especially of those who live in the country and are early risers. I like to know what a fine mind does with itself after a return to this world from the haunted palaces of dreams. For my own part, I never consider dreams as things not to be remembered. I look at them as the mirror of such thought as lie half-shaped and embryo in the mind—thoughts that we should not recognise as our own but for these spectral reflections. Often we are dimly unaware how certain prepossessions are seizing and advancing on our minds, till we are startled to find them tyrannising over our sleep. I first knew that I loved the person in the world I have loved most by seeing her for ever in my dreams. I first knew that I hated the person against whom for three years afterwards I burned with an unquenchable revenge by dreaming, night after night, that I was engaged in mortal conflict. Ah, from what guilty thoughts and evil passions might we save ourselves in the day did we more seriously acknowledge the monitors of the night! . . . Therefore is it that I have a curious interest in learning how imaginative men, of a certain age, pass the first hours after waking. . . The feelings of the mind are more chastened and spiritualised while fresh from the bath of dreams, before the low cares and petty troubles of the day begin."—Vol. II., p. 161.

At p. 308 of Vol. I., is this curious note, relative to a dream :—

"I have seen my father more than once under conditions of imminent danger, but never saw him evince the least symptom of fear, except in the presence of a wasp. His terror of wasps was constitutional and uncontrollable; he inherited it from his father, and so did his eldest brother. He frequently dreamt of those insects, and always reckoned such dreams as ominous of coming evil or trouble to him."

"THE TRUTH ABOUT GHOSTS."—The correspondence under this heading, which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* sometime ago, has been reprinted in pamphlet form as "A Ghostly Annual." The letters are introduced by a short preface by Mr. A. J. Melhuish, F.R.A.S., treating the subject from a "judicial point of view," his conclusion being that "the long and interesting correspondence thus commented upon seems to prove that apparitions or ghostly manifestations do sometimes occur at the time of death," although some of the facts recorded may reasonably be explained as having been some form or other of spectral illusion.

"NEW IDEAS FOR THINKERS."—E. W. Allen. Sixpence monthly. This new venture deals with "Comprehensionism," whatever that may be. If the editor have to deal with many brains as dull as ours, then all we can say is that his work is fully cut out for him. We wish him success.

TO THE READERS OF "LIGHT."

A considerable number of "Specimen Copies" of the current issue of this journal will be sent out in the course of a few days, and it may not be out of place briefly to draw attention to the special aims and characteristics of "LIGHT," especially as the paper will probably be read by many persons for the first time. As indicated by its subtitle, "LIGHT" is "a journal devoted to Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research." It proclaims a belief in the existence and life of the spirit apart from, and independent of, the material organism, and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits embodied and spirits disembodied. This position it firmly and consistently maintains. Beyond this it has no creed, and its columns are open to the fullest and freest discussion—conducted in a spirit of honest, courteous, and reverent inquiry—its only aim being, in the words of its motto, "Light, more Light!"

Among the phenomena specially recorded and discussed in these pages may be mentioned :—

Mesmerism, Trance, Clairvoyance, Thought-Transference, Apparitions, The Human "Double," Presence at a Distance, Haunted Houses, Communion with the Departed, Materialised Spirit Forms, The Spirit-Rap, The Spirit Voice, Spirit Writing, Automatic Writing, Movement of Material Objects without Physical Contact, Theosophic and Mystic Doctrines, &c., &c.

To the educated thinker who concerns himself with any of these subjects, or with other questions of an occult character, "LIGHT" affords a special vehicle of information and discussion; and as the editor has the co-operation of able contributors, of acknowledged experience and authority, whose opinions are deserving of permanent record, he confidently believes that the journal is worthy the cordial support of the most intelligent students of Psychological facts and phenomena.

During the course of the year upon which we have just entered we hope not only to give reports of phenomena now being witnessed, but also to introduce papers of special interest, and to more thoroughly discuss the doubts and difficulties of inquirers, with the view, if possible, of smoothing the path of investigation. Such matters will receive special attention. At the same time the claims of advanced Spiritualists will not by any means be overlooked. To the latter, an admirable series of articles from the pen of our indefatigable and able contributor, "M. A. (Oxon.)," dealing with one of the most astounding phases of Spiritual phenomena, will doubtless prove of absorbing interest. These papers are commenced in this issue, and will be continued, as far as practicable, week by week.

We appeal confidently alike to our present subscribers, and also to the many new ones we hope to place on our list during the next few weeks, to sustain and encourage us by doing all that in them lies towards the introduction of "LIGHT" to those whom they know to be interested, or likely to become so, in psychological study, and by inducing them to become regular readers. The literary, business, and editorial labour connected with "LIGHT," is given freely by those concerned, and in these circumstances we are sure our many friends will not fail to render our work less burdensome by placing us beyond anxiety as to the financial position of this journal. As we have already pointed out, were each reader to introduce only one new subscriber this object would be at once accomplished, and all we ask is that those who, in the past, have so frequently written in terms of approval and praise of "LIGHT," will give practical proof of their appreciation in the manner above indicated. Details as to terms of subscription, &c., will be found on page 6.

THE *English Illustrated Magazine* for January comes to hand freighted with good things. It is a marvellous sixpenny worth.

OFFICES OF "LIGHT,"
3, GREAT JAMES STREET,
BEDFORD ROW,
LONDON, W.C.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their seances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding and enclose stamps for the return postage.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, forwarded to our office in advance.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Half-column, £1. Whole Column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

Orders for Papers and Advertisements may be addressed to "The Manager." All other communications should be sent to "The Editor."

Cheques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to HENRY BARNES, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

Orders for Advertisements may also be sent to "The Ross Publishing Company," 4, Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, E.C., on or before Wednesday in each week.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained direct from our Office, and also from R. W. ALLEN, 4, Ave Maria-lane, London, and all Booksellers.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL.

Special attention is directed to the change in the address of the offices of this paper. They are now situated at 3, GREAT JAMES STREET, BEDFORD ROW, LONDON, W.C., and for the future all communications should be so addressed.

Light:

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5TH, 1884.

1884.—A PROSPECT.

By "M.A. (OXON.)"

He would be either a very wise or a very rash man who would venture to forecast the possibilities of a year in this epoch of change. With the ordinary themes of politics I am not concerned here. I am not called upon to say whether bloated continental armaments mean European war; or whether the sweet reasonableness of Irish discontent may develop into revolution. I have nothing to do with the Mahdi, not even as a sign of the times; nor with the machinations of the Secret Societies, except in so far as these and similar things are, all of them in their way, evidences of a state of unrest and feverish anticipation which is a note of the epoch in which we live.

My concern is limited to the subject which is dealt with in these pages. What is the outlook for Spiritualism—using the word in a broad sense as the antithesis of Materialism—in the coming year? In many ways, never more stormy; in many ways, never so good. For there is abundant evidence that Spiritualism, as a concrete system, has reached an intellectual stratum that it never before seriously touched. Thanks chiefly to the activity of the Society for Psychical Research, and especially to the writings of Messrs. Myers and Gurney in the public journals and magazines, hitherto tabooed facts have become fashionable, and matter of public and private talk among those who influence and lead opinion. Hence the certainty of a storm. Hence the pale horror of the *Lancet*, and the puerile funning of the *Saturday Review*. For, if these new ideas could have entered into the domain, of knowledge and experience represented by these journals without producing a storm of antagonism, it must have been owing to one of very few causes. Either they were insignificant enough to be dismissed without notice. Or they were inherently and conspicuously absurd, and might be left to die unaided. Or they were of the class of idea forming the stock-in-trade of the journals in question, but hardly respectable enough yet to be acknowledged. That they are vehemently assailed, that they produce on Pharisee and

Sadducee alike mingled horror and terror, is high testimony to their significance as potential factors of opinion in the future. We may depend upon it that when Science and Theology are both sufficiently awake to see a common enemy in Spiritualism there will be lively times.

Are Spiritualists, then, aware of the future that is in store for them? Do they appreciate the danger? Are they united among themselves? willing to sink individual opinion, and to unite in defence of the common faith? There is some sign that they are: there are many signs that they are not. I suppose that anything like uniformity is impossible, perhaps undesirable; though I confess my preference, when I go to fight, for a well-drilled regiment over an awkward squad, however enthusiastic. But we shall never in this generation get anything like a single really representative organisation. There is cheering sign, however, that those who have in days gone by borne the burden, who have witnessed to their faith, and who have handed on to others the duty that they themselves once so well discharged, are not indisposed to join a younger generation in organised defence of what we all hold in common. That is in itself a cheering sign. I have every hope that in the early spring the *London Spiritualist Alliance* may take its place as a Society of Spiritualists, with the objects and purposes which I set forward in the letter addressed to some Spiritualists, and shortly to be sent to many more, and that a rallying point may be established for those who are willing to avail themselves of it. That is all: and surely that can hurt no one, and is but the fulfilment of a plain duty.

Many Spiritualists—like myself—have taken courage from the bold and successful action of the S.P.R. The leaders of that Society have proceeded on the sensible ground that it is desirable, in face of a hostile opposition, to work up from admitted facts to those now scouted and scorned. They have done this with great patience, and with much success. They have laid their foundations solidly; and they have given their facts "bold advertisement." That they have got the public ear, as evidenced by the papers that have found entrance into such organs of opinion as *The Nineteenth Century* and *Fortnightly Review*, is in itself a gain that I am not indeed disposed to over-estimate, but which I think is not sufficiently appreciated. Some Spiritualists chafe because the facts propounded are (to them) so elementary. When, they ask impatiently, are they going to tackle something serious? They want the baby fed with beefsteak, regardless of the fact that the infant stomach will not stand such strong food. Already the public is becoming nauseated (witness the reception of Mr. Gurney's recent letter) and any attempt to force on those who are unprepared for it nutriment that they cannot digest will have a disastrous result.

I do not expect much from any attempt to force upon the present generation what it is quite unfit for. A study of the pages of the *Zoist* will shew how the objective, palpable facts of mesmerism, especially of healing of disease, advocated with infinite skill and courage, failed to make any permanent effect on a generation that did not want to believe them; that had no place for them in its mind, no use for them in the economy of its life. So it is with all these matters. There is a time and a place for them, and it is our business to have them ready when that conjunction occurs. The ground must be prepared. The seed must be stored; as time and opportunity serves, it may be sown; but the real harvest will come in later days. With all this, I am fully sure that the reapers of that epoch will look back with rejoicing to the labours of the S.P.R. in the present—labours into which they will then feel that they are entering.

Space warns me to narrow the view down to the future of this journal.

I hope to be able to continue the *Light* as they are now arranged.

week the evidence for various phases of materialisation which I have now, with the kind assistance of Mr. J. Fred. Collingwood, collected and arranged. The subject is one of much perplexity, but also of general interest, and I hope to arrange typical cases so as to give a specimen—more is incompatible with space—of the vast amount of evidence that has accumulated for the reality of this phenomenon.

There my personal work ends. For the rest, the character of the journal is in the hands of the Editor, and will be maintained on its old lines, I have no sort of doubt.

The last year's issue has contained a mass of philosophy, often of an abstruse character, and generally of a type that is over the head of the general reader. This has not met with sufficient elucidation and discussion, from want of space, and from consideration for the average reader, to whom it is mere *Abacadabra*. Thus writers and readers have both been losers. There is, unfortunately, no magazine of a special character in which such papers would find a fitting place and an adequate discussion. It has often struck me, and I throw out the suggestion for what it is worth, that it would be a gain to all parties if they were published in the shape of a pamphlet at irregular intervals as occasion required. The demand might not be great, but the writers would secure a fairer field; the readers would peruse at leisure what was not maimed by undue compression; and there would be space for reasonable discussion. I am, personally, an advocate of some such plan, first because I see that no adequate space can be found in "LIGHT;" and next, because I increasingly believe that a real grasp of truth is only to be attained by a patient study of every presentation of it.

Only one other detail strikes me. It has been suggested to the committee of the *London Spiritualist Alliance* that country members who desire it, might well receive a copy of "LIGHT" as a *quid pro quo* for their guinea subscription. Possibly, if there is any general feeling to that effect, such an arrangement might be made, and might be generally beneficial. All arrangements, however, are pending until the committee are justified in taking action by the number of applications for membership sent in. These will now soon reach the limit short of which they are pledged not to commence work.

1 *The Link: New Light on Old Paths*, is a new monthly magazine announced for February, 1884. It is edited by B. M. Marshall, who is, if we mistake not, a granddaughter of the Mrs. Marshall so well known to the early investigators of Spiritualism. *The Link* will be published at 1s., and the first number will contain, amongst others, an article entitled "Ghosts, Dreams, Apparitions, and Premonitions—their Possible Explanation."

WE notice in the current number of the Melbourne *Harbinger of Light* that Mr. Robert White on his recent visit to that city delivered two lectures which were received with much favour. In these discourses Mr. White, who, as is generally known, was formerly a secular lecturer, presented the reasons which induced him to renounce Materialism for Spiritualism. The hard logic of facts, he stated, compelled the change. He had held hundreds of sittings in his own house, and had obtained cumulative evidence of a physical force existing, as yet not classified by science, and that this force is frequently controlled by invisible intelligence. "Spiritualism went further than Materialism and explained much more. He thought Spiritualists were the better Freethinkers. They might be considered heretodox Freethinkers, while the majority of Materialists were orthodox Freethinkers."—*The Liberal*, Sydney, N.S.W.

SPIRITUALISTIC FRUIT AND FLOWER FESTIVAL.—A meeting of the members and friends of the Sydney Association of Spiritualists was held, recently, in the form of a fruit and flower service, at the City Hall, Castlereagh-street. Behind the platform the wall was tastefully decorated with flags, bannerets, and flowers, and the table of refreshments was also very invitingly laid out. The Lyceum Choir assisted in the musical department with their usual ability, Mr. Farrow, Misses Cockerton and Tyerman rendering, the former a song, and the two latter a duet, in good style. Recitations were given by Miss Atwater, Mr. Waldron, and Mr. Slocombe. Mr. Greville gave an address in which he reported progress, and invited new members to join, giving some good advice to those who wished to carry out the objects of the Association. During a fifteen minutes interval, fruit and cakes were handed round, when the meeting was converted into a *conversazione*, which was much enjoyed. Nearly the whole seating capacity of the hall was occupied by a very select audience.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is preferable that correspondents should append their names and addresses to communications. In any case, however, these must be supplied to the Editor as a guarantee of good faith.]

Christmas Thoughts.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should like to express my hearty agreement with what "M.A. (Oxon.)" said lately in "LIGHT" about the importance of insisting rather on the points of union that are to be found in diverse religious systems, than on the points of difference. I too believe, with him, that the wise and good of all ages and races are fundamentally at one, that the great religions of mankind express substantially the same truth, which is of universal validity for the human soul, however as to details men may differ and dispute. Nay, more, I believe that even the most sincere and earnest agnostics are implicitly, though not explicitly, at one with the most sincere and earnest dogmatic thinkers; yet when these innate intuitions, which are sometimes named *faith*, come to be worked out into the formulæ of understanding, the resultant creeds or denials may appear extremely dissimilar; while divergences are as healthful and necessary to the rich tapestry of life and thought as coincidences. But if the spirit common to all mankind be indeed the origin and substance of human ideas, we should expect to find a fundamental unity. In reading, formerly, translations of that grand spiritual monument, the "Bagavad-ghita," and in reading lately the copious and highly impressive extracts, that are made in works like that truly admirable book, "Oriental Religions," by Samuel Johnson (admirable alike for substance and style), from sacred poems of Brahmin and Buddhist, I have felt profoundly convinced of the fundamental identity of the spiritual intuitions in all earnest and enlightened souls, of whatever period or race. But on the other hand, a book like the "Esoteric Buddhism" of Mr. Sinnett, interesting and valuable as it is, emphasises rather the differences of detail in human creeds than the primary bases of unity in human faith. And, therefore, when dealing with such a book from our own Western and Christian point of view, we have in our turn to emphasise such differences of understanding.

The second subject on which I have a word to say is the objectivity, or universality of all thought. I believe that Mr. C. Massey has expressed a most important truth in his letter to "LIGHT" of the 17th ult., and expressed it on the whole in terms unexceptionally philosophical. What an individual thinks and feels he does not think and feel alone or for himself only, but "it becomes part of the intellectual stock of mankind, whether expressed in words or not." It "finds entrance into similarly occupied minds as their 'happy thoughts' and 'sudden inspirations.'" If all the so-called material world be really spiritual, such must indeed, as I have maintained, be the history of all perceptions, as well as of all thought. Thought is verily thought-transference—only we must beware of denying a co-operating activity of an individual character to the personal intelligence into which thought is so transferred. The very possibility of such thought-transference is, indeed, to be explained only by the root-identity of all personal intelligences. They share a common nature and a common reason; else would this community of mental goods be impossible. Until I assimilate a thought, it is not mine at all, but when I have done so it is as much mine as yours, though I may have "received it" from you, though you had the priority in the reception of it, which is indeed all that can be legitimately intended by origination thereof. For that a thought can be absolutely original to one particular intelligence cannot be believed. Deprived of all intercourse with his fellows, visible or invisible, an individual will die out of inanition. The truth seems, therefore, to be that in the eternal deeps of our Divine Personality there is universal co-operation in the formation of all thought—though some is more special to certain individualities, and is reflected in others—but reflection itself involves co-operation, active energy in forming according to idiosyncrasy. I can never be identical with you, and I can only reflect you according to my own capacity for assimilation.

Now in this view I see a partial justification of the Christian doctrine of *Vicarious Atonement*, so much objected to by Mr. Massey and others, and indeed so greatly objected to by myself in its ordinary quasi-orthodox rendering. Could so elevated, profound, and vast a Personality as that of Jesus Christ, one so unusually in harmony with the Universal Divine Ideal that underlies and is the substance of us all, live and die upon this earth without influencing for good, far-reaching and profound, the general heart and conscience of mankind?—nor only where the life and death have been consciously assimilated, but also in more secret yet none the less penetrative ways, even through more diffused and widely ramifying channels? Nay, how can this be denied by any who hold this doctrine of the objectivity and universality of thought? I cannot but suppose that so prevalent a belief must have some justification in fact, perverted, superstitious, and mischievous as the developments and applications of it may have been. How far the "Kiddle incident" is possibly satisfactorily accounted for by this hypothesis is perhaps a more difficult question, and one into which I shall not enter!

What Mr. Massey says concerning the *Anima Mundi* is

perhaps also rather more problematical. That our thoughts are dependent on, and to some extent derived from, the great Planetary Intelligence, in whose sphere we are included, is probably true; but to define the relation of his thoughts to ours, and ours to his, appears no more possible for us at present than to define the relations of our own thought to that of the cell-monads composing our organism. Yet, by *Anima Mundi*, Occultists in general appear to mean "the Ether" (which, as I said before, they deify), and Mr. Massey appears to use the word as a kind of abstract designation for the "objective or transferable," of every spiritual (or mental) condition, by which terms he judiciously paraphrases the vague words "matter," and "material."

It is certainly quite true that ideas are "in the air." Discoveries in science, inventions, philosophical speculations, poetic inspirations, are constantly originated from independent centres, without apparent communication, and this gives rise often to heartburnings, and disputes, possibly even to litigation. It looks, therefore, as if they really originated in some common source, and made their way thence into these isolated individual minds, who are engaged as recluses in their studies and laboratories on elaborating them with seeming independence. Whole communities are possessed at the same moment with similar aims and ideas. Indeed, Bishop Butler says that communities may go mad, as well as individuals. A person, moreover, may start a notion of his own, but unless the human soil be prepared for the germination of it, unless it finds a congenial atmosphere, the man will never be heard of except as a crack-brained creature, more or less harmless. Yet, perhaps, a century after the same idea will be re-expressed, and the result will be a tremendous moral and physical explosion, or spiritual pestilence, a mighty movement of peoples in the direction of beneficent reforming, or portentous change. What the Germans call the "*Zeit-Geist*," is favourable. Who, or what is he, this *Zeit-Geist*? The genius of an era? Is he the true *Anima Mundi*, the intelligent spirit of the Planet, or of the Solar Orb, in whose sphere we all move, just as the blood-corpuscles move in the spaces of our vaster and nobler individual organism? Possibly—nay, probably. Still, the great Divine All of Spirit is engaged in the inspiration and origination of ideas, and all of us are concerned in such upheavals, however one crisis may belong especially to one intelligence, or order of intelligences.

The conception of Vicarious Atonement is by no means unknown to Indian religious thought. Vishnu is incarnate in Rama and in Khrishna to be the Saviour, the deliverer of men. The Scandinavian had his Saviour in Balder. The Egyptian and Greek mythologies, too, embody the same conception in Osiris, Dionysus, Prometheus, which is also manifest in the *Oresteia* of the Greek dramatic poets. We cannot, indeed, be delivered from our own lower selves, and from the doom in which these are involved, unless we deliver ourselves—that is, unless we co-operate with a Divine Deliverer, who is one with ourselves, at the very root of our own being. Nevertheless, this diviner and deeper self needs to be awakened by individuals who have already attained, in a measure far exceeding the common, to the reconciliation of their present every-day external selves with this inner spiritual nature belonging to all in the order of Being, but not yet to all in the order of Becoming. We must not be too proud in this sense to accept salvation at the hands of another—this other being in very deed God manifest in the flesh, and therefore one with ourselves. God is not so fully manifest in us now and here, but through the intervention of an Elder Brother He may become so hereafter. But evidently to different races and times, as also to ourselves at different stages of our career, He will be differently manifested. A friend, a sister, a wife, a mother, a child may be Christ, or God manifest to deliver me. Contemplation of my own navel, or of my own exclusive spiritual resources, may make a dreamer, or a saint, but scarcely a good healthy man or woman; whereas one in need, a leper, a pauper, a beggar, a helpless infant, by drawing out my love and care, may help me to grow and expand to the full stature of my hitherto latent and stunted Divine Humanity. We cannot save ourselves, but we can let others save us—and an outcast may do it, with a mere touch of the hand—of my hand on hers, or of hers on mine. If that is humiliating to pride, all the better, the more fortunate for us, since we need to become as little children before we can "enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

But on the other hand, if we were not one with these Christs who come and save us, either willingly, knowingly, or unwilling and unknowing, they could do nothing for us. We did and suffered what Jesus Christ did and suffered, because we are one with Him. And His life and death, therefore, help and enable us to live and die in the same spirit—which is Salvation.

And now as to justification by faith. How nobly is the Divine function of these unconscious saviours, the common victims of all too common suffering, expressed in James Hinton's "*Mystery of Pain*"! The wholesome kernel of the doctrine is that salvation from the lower self, and the curse thereof is through development of such spiritual intuitions as lead necessarily, however slowly, to an unselfish and righteous life. How this is to be attained is a further question; but it will usually be attained, I believe, through the sympathetic beholding of righteous and loving lives superior in fulfilment to our own.

Faith in Jesus Christ is usually the experience of a vital change in ourselves through the spiritual influence of Jesus Christ. But the essential living and life-giving kernel of it is the possession, however acquired, of the same developed, or developing spirit as that which was so fully manifested in Jesus Christ. The popular and official travesties or corruptions of Christianity are only, like the popular and official travesties of other religions, what was to be expected from human nature. They are the steps of progress man must take. Indeed, speculatively able though much of it be, I cannot say that the representations of Buddhism in Mr. Sinnett's book appear so spiritually elevated, and so universal in religious application as the representations of it made elsewhere. For the Buddha is a Saviour, a Redeemer, God incarnate to many an Indian devotee. While in the Sāṅkhya system (believed to be the very source of Buddhistic speculative elements) I find the cardinal principle of my philosophy, the eternal substantiality of individuals.

If the hag, Hatred, commission her black brood of curses to wither and kill unseen, shall not the holy spells of Love have virtue to diffuse subtle healing, and invisible redemption?

RODEN NOEL.

Miss Corner's Christmas Tree.
To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Will you allow me to correct an error in my letter of last week? It is the afternoon of the 7th January, not the 10th, that I shall be at home to all who would like to see the clothing, &c., which I have collected for the 200 poor children.

I trust my friends will come and assist on the 10th. A select party will be at the Memorial Hall, Bethnal Green, at three p.m., to dress the tree, and get all ready for the little guests at 5.30. Any who would wish to join us (strong, active young people, for there will be plenty of hard work; and one or two good pianists to relieve my sisters) will oblige by communicating with me, as I have to make special provision for my friends and helpers.

Thanking you, sir, for your kind aid in giving publicity to my charitable endeavours,—I am, faithfully yours,

CAROLINE CORNER.

3, St. Thomas's-square, Hackney.

TESTIMONIAL TO MR. H. BURTON.

A testimonial was recently presented to Mr. H. Burton at a large and representative gathering of Spiritualists at the rooms of the N.S.E.S., Weir's-court, Newcastle-on-Tyne, as a mark of appreciation of his services to the cause of Modern Spiritualism in the North of England, and as a farewell to him on the departure of himself and family to Queensland. Above 100 friends sat down to a tea, after which a meeting was held. Mr. J. J. Morse (of London) was elected to the chair; and the assembled friends were addressed by the chairman, Mr. W. H. Robinson, Secretary to the Testimonial Fund, Mr. Edmunds, of Sunderland, Mr. W. H. Lambelle, of South Shields, Mr. James Robertson, of Glasgow, Mr. Patterson, of Gateshead, Mr. Appleby, President of North Shields Society, and Mr. Kersey, of Newcastle. These gentlemen testified their appreciation of Mr. Burton, not only as a man and a friend, but also as a zealous and powerful advocate of the philosophy of Spiritualism, and expressed regret at losing so able a worker, accompanied with hearty good wishes for his welfare wherever his feet may tread. A telegram from Mr. E. W. Wallis was read, regretting his inability to be present, and demonstrating his sympathy by a donation, as also were letters from several others to the same effect. The testimonial presented to Mr. Burton consisted of a purse of gold amounting to above £16, but several subscriptions which came in late, and some sent direct to himself, raised the amount ultimately to about £20. An address engrossed on vellum was presented to Mr. Burton by the North Shields friends, also a resolution from the Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum (of London). Mr. Burton very feelingly responded, cordially thanking all for their expressions of esteem and sympathy, and assured them that these would be treasured in his memory together with the many reminiscences of the many happy hours spent with them. He also spoke of the blessing which Spiritualism had been to him personally, seeing that it had rescued him from the cheerless ocean of doubt, where immortality was a blank.

The proceedings terminated with hearty votes of thanks to the chairman, Mr. Morse, and to the secretary of the Testimonial Fund, Mr. W. H. Robinson, whose assiduous zeal contributed materially to the success of the evening.

Subsequently it was determined to follow the example of the Shields friends; an address was drawn up expressing the prevailing respect and esteem entertained for Mr. Burton; it was engrossed on vellum, and after being duly signed by representative Spiritualists, for and on behalf of the various localities which had taken part in the testimonial, it was presented to Mr. Burton previous to his departure, which took place on December 16th, when quite an ovation was given to him by the numerous friends assembled, as he and family took their seats in the train and bade farewell to Tyneside. He embarked at Plymouth on December 18th, on board the s.s. "Roma," bound for Brisbane, Queensland, where he purposes establishing his future home. Truly, hundreds wish him God-speed.—*Corr.*

PHASES OF MATERIALISATION.

A CHAPTER OF RESEARCH

IN THE

OBJECTIVE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By "M.A. (Oxon.)"

INTRODUCTION.

At various intervals during the past ten years I have published chapters of personal research* among what are known as the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. It was my desire to deal from my own experience with the ordinary phenomena known to those who have attended the public circles of physical mediums, and to close my survey with a chapter devoted to materialisation. I have, at various times, dealt with raps, abnormal movements of objects, luminous appearances, musical sounds abnormally made, scents similarly produced, and spirit-photography. It remained to deal with what is roughly known as materialisation. Here I was for a long time stopped. I had no personal experience or evidence such as would warrant me in treating this as I had treated other branches of my subject. Nor did I seem able to procure any on which I could personally rely. Every effort to gain conviction failed, and I was thrown back upon myself. The methods of investigation were to me eminently unsatisfactory, and I abandoned the attempt to get that firm personal faith which a face-to-face interview with a near and well-known friend, repeated till no room for doubt remained, would have given me. I had indeed seen, under circumstances more or less conclusive, more than one face that claimed to be that of a departed friend. But I had not arrived, by repeated observation, at a state of conviction and assured certainty.

This, however, is merely a personal matter. Though I have not been successful, thousands have. It is impossible to study the mass of evidence published in this country—American records, infinitely more voluminous, I have been reluctantly compelled to leave practically untouched—without a logical conviction of its cogency. As I mass the records in orderly sequence, presenting only such cases as seem to me to be worthily recorded, and suitably attested, giving such only as possess some striking feature or point to some theory, I am sure that even regular students of these mysteries will be astonished at the wealth and completeness of the evidence.

That a great deal of what is on record is of no use to such a work as mine goes without saying. I do not criticise unfavourably any narrative because I do not quote it. Many a case may well be entirely satisfactory to an observer whose well-known friend has returned to him, which is worthless to all the world beside. It is my business to pick what I think good cases on the face of them: among them to select such as I can hope that space will allow me to use: and to exercise such care and discrimination in my work as is rightly required of a compiler.

It is impossible that I should pursue the more rigid methods of the Society for Psychical Research in dealing with these subjects. They have personally verified every case which they will use in their forthcoming volumes. With infinite patience and at the cost of enormous labour the pile of cases submitted to, or collected by them, have been classified, arranged, and verified, whenever possible. The result will be proportionately valuable to the student; though, I fear, not in adequate degree impressive as regards the opinion of the general or scientific public.

To this method I can make no pretence. Life is too short, too full already of work and care, for one brain and a single pair of hands to undertake any such labour. Nor do I conceive it necessary. My task is to sift by ordinary methods evidence already published, to classify and arrange

it, to indicate its value as a contribution to the study of a very difficult problem, and, whenever I can, to illustrate from my own experience what I am quoting on the published authority of others. This, and no more complicated one, is the task I have set myself. It is a long one, but before it is complete I shall have given reasons for my conviction that materialisation of inanimate objects, of parts of the human body, and even of the full form, are facts established by irrefutable evidence. I shall have discussed some theories, how fruitlessly remains to be seen. And I shall then have presented to the readers of "LIGHT" a connected *résumé* of the grounds on which most Spiritualists feel themselves compelled to accept as proven a phenomenon so astounding as this.

PHASES OF MATERIALISATION; OR, THE MANIFESTATION TO HUMAN SENSES OF OBJECTS NOT PREVIOUSLY DISCERNIBLE ON THE PLANE OF MATTER.*

Among the problems of Spiritualism materialisation stands conspicuous. No subject has been so loosely handled by those who have undertaken to write upon it, while in none is there more urgent need of precision. It is questionable, indeed, whether the time has yet come when anything like a satisfactory treatment of the whole question can be attempted. We know too little of the power that lies at the back of these phenomena, to say nothing of our utter ignorance of its mode of operation, to do more than treat the subject tentatively. No doubt a very large body of fact has been accumulated. The very abundance of the material is one of the chief difficulties of dealing with it in any precise manner. Thousands of cases have been recorded, each with its element of surpassing wonder, and it is not strange that the recorder, fresh from a face-to-face interview with what he believes to be a temporarily incarnated spirit, and that spirit not infrequently a dear and lamented friend, should deal with his narrative emotionally rather than logically. His emotions have been deeply stirred, and in most cases his narrative shews traces of that disturbance. Or, at least, his faculty of wonder has been strongly appealed to, and the marvellous enters largely into his description, to the detriment usually of precise and accurate statement.

Add to this the rare difficulty of exact observation; the necessary precautions with which the materialised form is hedged round; our ignorance of the power which spirits have over gross matter (as, for instance, with respect to the introduction and subsequent removal of the drapery with which the form is clothed); and the impossibility of securing absolute and definite test conditions on most occasions; and it will be seen that the question is one which it behoves the writer to handle with great care.

In recording the phases of materialisation, so far as they are ripe for record, I do not propose to go over the whole ground, or even to notice any considerable number of instances such as a historian would be bound to note and comment on. Any such attempt would lead me far beyond my prescribed limits; while to omit all reference to the subject would mar the symmetry of the plan which I have laid down for myself. My own experience has, unfortunately, been very slender. Only once, at a time now long past, had I personal proof of the materialisation of a hand and arm at our own séances. On the contrary, there is scarcely a medium in this country or in America in whose presence these phenomena have not occurred repeatedly and in profusion. To notice all, or even the most conspicuous, would be impossible. I desire, therefore, to deal with the subject on some orderly plan and to draw from the mass of matter at my disposal only such cases as are illustrative of the exact point under discussion. If I omit many which my

* It is right to state that the early part of this chapter has appeared substantially in the *Psychological Review*. It is here reprinted for the sake of unity and completeness, and as being, presumably, unknown to many readers of "LIGHT."

* "Researches in Spiritualism," *Human Nature*. *Psychological Review*.

readers may possibly think more striking, I beg them to consider that I express no opinion whatever upon cases which I do not mention; least of all do I cast any imputation on any record by omitting to refer to it. I must perforce select; and in making my selection I shall be guided solely by the principle of applicability, taking due care to present only such cases as I believe to be authentic, and knowing full well that there are, perhaps, hundreds of others just as suitable which space forbids me even to refer to.

I have spoken hitherto of materialisation in its usual sense of the production of the whole or some part of a human form; but in dealing more precisely with the subject, I shall notice first of all the materialisation of inanimate objects, and then of hands, faces, and finally, of the perfect human body. These points I shall discuss in order, drawing my illustrations from observations made by myself or my own friends, or from some more than usually striking published record. I shall canvass the theories put forward, and state what seem to me to be the points proven, and those which still remain in the realm of speculation. It will, thus, be no part of my business to discuss the results obtained through the mediumship of any one person, or to compare them with those obtained in other places and by other mediums. I shall not even seek to enumerate the many mediums who have contributed facts to our knowledge of this vexed question; much less shall I estimate the relative importance of results so obtained. And when I have said all I shall be prepared to find that a dark and mysterious subject has not been made much clearer by my researches, though I cherish a hope that it will not be made more unintelligible by the attempt to sweep away some of the cobwebs that hang around it, and so clear off some of the misconceptions with which it is beset.

It is a melancholy fact, that the discussion of this subject, which ought to be approached in a spirit of judicial calmness and impartiality, has been greatly embarrassed by the importation of irrelevant matter, as well as by the intemperate language which some heated partisans have condescended to employ. Those who have considered that a fact so tremendous should rest on testimony the most unimpeachable have been held up to reprobation as ill-conditional sceptics, quibbling and cavilling out of pure wrong-headedness. When they have exposed a mean fraud, and have shewn how the methods of investigation that are in common use positively invite imposture, while rampant credulity fosters its growth, they have been met with a storm of jeers and taunts as persecutors of mediums and "enemies of the cause." Angry recrimination, and windy declamation, valueless in itself and irritating in its utter inapplicability, have been rife, until at last it has well nigh come to pass that some writers rush to the rescue of every incriminated impostor or pretender to mediumship, and bespatter with abuse any who presume to criticise their performances. This regrettable temper renders it difficult to discuss with candour and completeness what is surrounded by such an atmosphere of prejudice. It is, however, imperative on any writer who would deal fairly with this obscure subject to disregard merely emotional appeals to the passions, to brush aside the language of objurgation, and to confine his attention strictly to that which is capable of proof such as reasonable men rightly require. And, in doing this, he will pay no heed whatever to angry taunts and innuendoes, convinced that he is the honest medium's truest friend, as he trusts that he is, as he desires to be, "a terror to evil doers." Truth can have nothing to gain from concealment. True mediums have nothing to fear from honest and thorough investigation; nor, I may add, have they anything to gain from association with the questionable methods so dear to the enthusiast and the impostor. By such methods our knowledge is so far from being advanced, that the little we do possess is

befogged and besmirched with recurring scepticism, until the demon of doubt intrudes everywhere, and belief is made difficult if not impossible. And yet no careful investigator who has spent time and pains in the investigation doubts that there is a substratum of fact which impudent imposture and credulous enthusiasm have done their best to hide out of sight. It is the business of one who deals with the evidence to clear away what is manifestly insufficient, to pass by records that may be thoroughly satisfactory to those who penned them, but which do not stand, and probably were not written to meet, scientific sifting, and to present that substratum of evidence which establishes the fact that unseen operators can, under certain ascertained conditions, give temporary materiality to objects not previously discernible by human sense. The presentation of that evidence must be by sample only, and surely no temper need be imported into a purely scientific discussion. The air should be clear, and the eye unclouded, the mind impartial, and the language calm, when new and obscure phenomena are to be estimated. In this spirit let us approach the sifting of the mass of evidence that has accumulated.

PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS IN THEIR BEARING ON MATERIALISATION.

I have already discussed, in the course of my "Researches," the passage of solid bodies through material obstacles, and have given many cases from my own experience on which I rest my belief in that startling fact. The dissolution of material particles and their subsequent recombination is the converse of that process by which an impalpable substance, animate or inanimate, is temporarily clothed with material particles so as to become cognisable by our senses, and by which these particles are again dispersed. As, in dealing with the former phenomena, it was necessary to guard carefully against confounding cases where objects might conceivably have been introduced into closed spaces without the disintegration of their material substances from those in which such a process must have taken place, so here it is necessary to distinguish between cases of *materialisation* and those which may conceivably be *importation* (e.g., of drapery with which many forms are clothed), or *transformation*, or *transfiguration* of the medium. The evidence on which our case is rested must exclude possibility of confusion with that on which these very different phenomena rest. If drapery is seen to be similar in texture and appearance to that which our looms produce, it must be shewn to be at least probable that it was not so produced, and imported into the closed room. If it be handled and found to vary in texture, as is often the case; still better, if it vary in bulk, or disappear altogether, such evidence is forthcoming. It then becomes a question of its value and sufficiency.

Yet, again, in the course of my "Researches," I have dealt at length with what I believe to be an elementary and inceptive form of materialisation. The floating masses of luminous vapour which I have so often alluded to, and which I believe to be the pabulum used by the unseen operators, assume at times sufficient density to make an impression on the sensitized plate, though they remain invisible to the natural eye. In the results of spirit-photography, we have evidence of incipient materialisation. The luminous vapour is condensed into a form, or portion of a form; and that portion carried further would give the shadowy figures that some of us have seen in the presence of Home and Slade, and finally the solid beings of flesh and blood structured according to the perfection of human nature, such as occur in the presence of ordinary physical mediums. It seems to be only a question of degree.

It is well then to keep in mind the evidence that I have adduced under these two heads, as bearing somewhat on what I am now about to bring forward.

(To be continued.)

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; *C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner, *Mr. Rutter, *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of "Transcendental Physics," &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffmann, of Würzburg; Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of Petersburg; Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; *Dr. Robert Friese, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Captain R. Burton; Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning, Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; *Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H.I.H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H.S.H. the Prince of Solms; H.S.H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H.S.H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; The Countess of Caithness; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers, and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?—

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS, writing to the editor of *Licht, Mehr Licht*, April 10th, 1881, in reference to phenomena which occurred in Paris through the Brothers Davenport, said:—"As a Prestidigitator of repute, and a sincere Spiritualist, I affirm that the medianimic facts demonstrated by the two brothers were absolutely true, and belonged to the Spiritualistic order of things in every respect. Messrs. Robin and Robert Houdin, when attempting to imitate these said facts, never presented to the public anything beyond an infantine and almost grotesque parody of the said phenomena, and it would be only ignorant and obstinate persons who could regard the questions seriously as set forth by these gentlemen. . . . Following the data of the learned chemist and natural philosopher, Mr. W. Crookes, of London, I am now in a position to prove plainly, and by purely scientific methods, the existence of a 'psychic force' in mesmerism, and also 'the individuality of the spirit' in Spiritual manifestation."

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bedroom, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne, Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This, my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, December 6th, 1877.

ADVICE TO INQUIRERS.

The Conduct of Circles.—By M.A. (Oxon.)

If you wish to see whether Spiritualism is really only jugglery and imposture, try it by personal experiment.

If you can get an introduction to some experienced Spiritualist, on whose good faith you can rely, ask him for advice; and, if he is holding private circles, seek permission to attend one to see how to conduct séances, and what to expect.

There is, however, difficulty in obtaining access to private circles, and, in any case, you must rely chiefly on experiences in your own family circle, or amongst your own friends, all strangers being excluded. The bulk of Spiritualists have gained conviction thus.

Form a circle of from four to eight persons, half, or at least two, of negative, passive temperament, and preferably of the female sex; the rest of a more positive type.

Sit, positive and negative alternately, secure against disturbance, in subdued light, and in comfortable and unconstrained positions, round an uncovered table of convenient size. Place the palms of the hands flat upon its upper surface. The hands of each sitter need not touch those of his neighbour, though the practice is frequently adopted.

Do not concentrate attention too fixedly on the expected manifestations. Engage in cheerful but not frivolous conversation. Avoid dispute or argument. Scepticism has no deterrent effect, but a bitter spirit of opposition in a person of determined will may totally stop or decidedly impede manifestations. If conversation flags, music is a great help, if it be agreeable to all, and not of a kind to irritate the sensitive ear. Patience is essential; and it may be necessary to meet ten or twelve times, at short intervals, before anything occurs. If after such trial you still fail, form a fresh circle. Guess at the reason of your failure, eliminate the inharmonious elements, and introduce others. An hour should be the limit of an unsuccessful séance.

The first indications of success usually are a cool breeze passing over the hands, with involuntary twitching of the hands and arms of some of the sitters, and a sensation of throbbing in the table. These indications, at first so slight as to cause doubt as to their reality, will usually develop with more or less rapidity.

If the table moves, let your pressure be so gentle on its surface that you are sure you are not aiding its motions. After some time you will probably find that the movement will continue if your hands are held over but not in contact with it. Do not, however, try this until the movement is assured, and be in no hurry to get messages.

When you think that the time has come, let some one take command of the circle and act as spokesman. Explain to the unseen Intelligence that an agreed code of signals is desirable, and ask that a tilt may be given as the alphabet is slowly repeated at the several letters which form the word that the Intelligence wishes to spell. It is convenient to use a single tilt for No, three for Yes, and two to express doubt or uncertainty.

When a satisfactory communication has been established, ask if you are rightly placed, and if not, what order you should take. After this, ask who the Intelligence purports to be, which of the company is the medium, and such relevant questions. If confusion occurs, ascribe it to the difficulty that exists in directing the movements at first with exactitude. Patience will remedy this, if there be a real desire on the part of the Intelligence to speak with you. If you only satisfy yourself at first that it is possible to speak with an Intelligence separate from that of any person present, you will have gained much.

The signals may take the form of raps. If so, use the same code of signals, and ask as the raps become clear that they may be made on the table, or in a part of the room where they are demonstrably not produced by any natural means, but avoid any vexatious imposition of restrictions on free communication. Let the Intelligence use its own means; if the attempt to communicate deserves your attention, it probably has something to say to you, and will resent being hampered by useless interference. It rests greatly with the sitters to make the manifestations elevating or frivolous, and even tricky.

Should an attempt be made to entrance the medium, or to manifest by any violent methods, or by means of form-manifestations, ask that the attempt may be deferred till you can secure the presence of some experienced Spiritualist. If this request is not heeded, discontinue the sitting. The process of developing a trance-medium is one that might disconcert an inexperienced inquirer. Increased light will check noisy manifestations.

Lastly—Try the results you get by the light of Reason. Maintain a level head and a clear judgment. Do not believe everything you are told, for though the great unseen world contains many a wise and discerning Spirit, it also has in it the accumulation of human folly, vanity, and error; and this lies nearer to the surface than that which is wise and good. Distrust the free use of great names. Never for a moment abandon the use of your Reason. Do not enter into a very solemn investigation in a spirit of idle curiosity or frivolity. Cultivate a reverent desire for what is pure, good, and true. You will be repaid if you gain only a well-grounded conviction that there is a life after death, for which a pure and good life before death is the best and wisest preparation.

THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC PHYSICAL SEANCES.

Circular issued by the late Central Association of Spiritualists.

Few Spiritualists can have failed to note, with regret, the deterioration which has of late years taken place in the conditions under which physical phenomena have been sought in public séances.

These conditions—so favourable to fraud on the part of dishonest mediums, and so calculated to excite suspicion in the minds of observers—have led to the most disastrous results. We are not speaking without full warrant when we say that there is hardly a public medium for physical manifestations in this country against whom, at one time or other, charges of imposture have not been brought. We fear that in some cases no reasonable doubt can be entertained that fraud of the grossest kind was really perpetrated; while in other cases there is reason to believe that—whatever may have been the appearance to inexperienced spectators—there was no conscious deception on the part of the medium.

But in either case the name of Spiritualism has been brought into discredit, and we are forcibly driven to the conclusion that other methods of procedure must be amended. We must demonstrate our abhorrence of imposture by disavowing and discouraging all conditions which do not plainly shut out even the suspicion of its impossibility.

Obviously these remarks can have little reference to family circles, which are naturally held sacred by those who regard them as affording opportunities for veritable “communion with the dead.” But it is open to grave question whether—even in the case of family circles—*inquirers* should ever be permitted to make their first acquaintance with Spiritual phenomena by introduction to séances held for physical manifestations in the dark, or where a cabinet is used for the seclusion of the medium.

We are chiefly concerned, however, with what are known as public or promiscuous séances for physical manifestations.

These have been of late years generally marked by the following characteristics:—(1) The séance has been conducted in imperfect light, or in total darkness. (2) The medium has been isolated from the circle, by being placed either in a cabinet or behind a curtain. (3) The sitters have been, either wholly or in part, unacquainted with the subject and with each other. (4) There has not unfrequently been a manifest want of harmony, consequent upon differences of opinion as to the nature and value of the tests employed.

These conditions, usually found in combination, effectually preclude careful and dispassionate investigation; open wide an avenue to fraud; suggest suspicion of its presence even where it does not exist; and in many cases, we fear, expose the medium to very injurious influences.

Such conditions should be allowed to prevail no longer. “Mixed” circles should be as little mixed as possible—mere wonder-seekers, and men whose moral atmosphere is known to be impure, being carefully excluded. Above all, darkness should give way to light. In the early days of Spiritualism public dark circles were the exception, and there is no need for them now. There is abundant evidence that, with mediums of the present day, satisfactory phenomena, including even “form” manifestations, can be obtained without isolation—the medium, where a cabinet is used, being placed near, but *outside of it*, and in full view of the sitters. But even if this were not so, it is neither wise nor honourable to expose mediums to the risks which have been shewn to attend séances held under the conditions that have of late been prevalent; and it were far better that we should have no public manifestations of physical phenomena than that they should be sought under circumstances which, to say the least, inevitably conduce to suspicion.

In view of all these considerations, believing that fraud is not of the essence of this confessedly obscure subject, but rather an accident dependent on faulty conditions of research; feeling that Spiritualists have the remedy for the evil in their own hands, and that without its conscientious application they cannot hope to maintain a fair reputation before the world; we earnestly recommend—*That in all public circles held for physical phenomena, the medium be so placed, and in such light, as to be continuously under observation by each member of the circle.*

Edwin Adams, Cardiff

W. P. Adshead, Derby

Alexander Aksakof, St. Petersburg

G. P. Allan, London

W. R. Armstrong, Newcastle-on-Tyne

R. Baikie, M.D., late H.E.L.C.S., Edinburgh

*T. P. Barkas, F.G.S., Newcastle-on-Tyne

Frederick A. Binney, Manchester

*Anna Blackwell, Paris

John L. Bland, President of Hull Psychological Society

Hannah Blundell, Manchester

John James Bodmer, London

Hugh Booth, Sowerby Bridge

Eliza Boucher, Minehead

Colonel Joshua Brayn, Jersey

Emma Hardinge-Britten, Manchester

William Brown, Burnley

Henry Burton, Newcastle-on-Tyne

Alexander Calder, London

†Robert Redgrave Cann, Harleston, Norfolk

Robert Scammell Clarke, Hon. Sec. Plymouth Free Spiritual Society

John Colley, Hon. Sec. Birmingham Christian Spiritualist Society

John Cowie, Dumbarton

John Crane, Houghton-le-Spring

William Day, Ipswich

James Dawbarn, London

Thomas Dawson, Hon. Sec. Gateshead Spiritualist Society

David Duguid, Glasgow

T. H. Edmonds, Sunbury-on-Thames

*W. Eglinton, London

J. Crossley Eno, Dulwich

Thomas Everitt, London

John S. Farmer, London

Lewis Firth, Hon. Sec. Rochdale Spiritualist Society

Richard Fitton, Manchester

Charlotte FitzGerald, London

D. G. FitzGerald, M.S.Tel.E., London

Elizabeth FitzGerald, London

*Hannah Ford, Leeds

George Forster, Hon. Sec. Seghill Spiritualist Association

H. E. Frances, Hon. Sec. Brixton Psychological Society

William Gill, Brighton

Henry Goodchild, Hon. Sec. Middlesborough Assoc. Spiritualists

Thomas Grant, Maidstone

G. F. Green, London

Joseph N. Greenwell, Hon. Sec. Dalston Association

S. C. Hall, F.S.A., London

*Mrs. F. V. Hallock, Chiswick, London

William Hardy, Hon. Sec. Sheffield Psychological Association

Samuel Hayes, Hon. Sec. Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists

Georgiana Houghton, London

H. T. Humphreys, London

Berks T. Hutchinson, L.D.S., R.C.S.I., Cape Town, South Africa

Hugh Hutchinson, President Islington Home Circle

John Enmore Jones, London

H. A. Kersey, Newcastle-on-Tyne

W. F. Kirby, London

Edward Larrad, President Leicester Spiritualist Society

John Lamont, Liverpool

P. G. Leymarie, President Soc. Sci. d'Etudes Psychologiques, Paris

J.E. Lightbown, Hon. Sec. Manchester and Salford Soc. Spiritualists

R. W. Lishman, Hon. Cor. Sec. Central London Spir. Evidence Soc

“M.A. (Oxon.),” London

Iver MacDonnell, London

John McG. Munro, Hon. Sec. Glasgow Association of Spiritualists

Thomas McKinney, Peterborough

*C. C. Massey, London

William Miall, London

William Morris, London

J. J. Morse, London

Hay Nisbet, Glasgow

Roden Noel, London

W. G. Pickersgill, London

Thomas Pinkey, Durham

Richard Pearce, London

Cornelius Pearson, London

*Edward R. Pease, London

*Frank Podmore, London

*Thomas Pole, Clifton

Charles Poole, Hon. Sec. Yorkshire District Com. of Spiritualists

John Pringle, Hon. Sec. Hetton Spiritual Society

S. R. Redman, London

George Ridley, Hon. Sec. North Durham Spiritualist Society

A. J. Riko, The Hague

W. C. Robson, Newcastle-on-Tyne

James Robertson, Glasgow

E. Dawson Rogers, London

George Rogers, President Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists

John Rouse, Croydon

Adam Rushton, Minister, Macclesfield Society of Spiritualists

Rev. Dr. Sexton, London.

*Thos Shorter, London

J. Bowring Sloman, Plympton

S. T. Speer, M.D. (Edin.), London

M. A. Stack, London

Lucia C. Stone, Bridport

Edith L. Stone, Bridport

Morell Theobald, London

Ellen Miall Theobald, London

A. Teague, Hon. Sec. South African Spiritual Evidence Society

E. A. Tietkens, London

I. Thompson, Manchester

*E. Louisa Thompson Nosworthy, Liverpool

Charles Tomlinson, London

George Tommy, Bristol

Jno. P. Turner, Leamington

Mary Wainwright, London

†Alfred Russel Wallace, F.R.G.S., Godalming

E. W. Wallis, Nottingham

*Rev. W. Whitear, London

A. S. Winchester, San Francisco.

W. Winlow, Hon. Sec. Ashington Spiritual Society, Northumberland

Oswald Wirth, Paris

George Wyld, M.D., London

J. F. Young, Llanelli

[Persons wishing to have their names added to the above list are invited to intimate their desire to the Editor of “LIGHT.”]

† Is of opinion that public miscellaneous séances for physical manifestations should be altogether discontinued.

† Would prefer that the word “conscious” should be omitted from the last sentence of the second paragraph.

‡ Is of opinion that public miscellaneous séances and professional mediumship for physical manifestations should be altogether discouraged.

§ Is opposed to all public séances, whether in the light or the dark, unless the conditions are favourable to a complete investigation.